Claims

1. A subscriber line circuit (102) for a communication system (100, 200) having subscriber-side communication means (120) for connecting subscriber terminals (110A-B) and having network-side communication means (118) for coupling said subscriber line circuit (102) to the communication system (100, 200), characterized in that

XXXII. the network-side communication means (118) include means for connecting to a packet-based network (108, 202),

XXXIII. the subscriber line circuit (102) has protocol means (122) for communicating with different network elements (112A-E, 114, 116) of the communication system (100, 200), and

XXXIV. the subscriber line circuit (102) has means (124) for bi-directionally converting the information transmitted by the subscriber-side communication means to and from the subscriber terminals (110A-B) into the information transmitted by the network-side communication means (118) to and from the communication system (100, 200).

2. The subscriber line circuit as claimed in claim 1, characterized by means for automatically determining the link to the different network elements (112A-E, 114, 116) during booting of the subscriber line circuit (102).

3. The subscriber line circuit as claimed in claim 1, characterized by means for manually setting the link to the different network elements (112A-E, 114, 116).

4. The subscriber line circuit as claimed in one of the claims 1 to 3, characterized in that
the subscriber-side communication means (120) include means

for connecting conventional TDM subscriber terminals (110A).

5. The subscriber line circuit as claimed in one of the claims 1 to 4, characterized in that
the subscriber-side communication means (120) include means for connecting conventional xDSL subscriber terminals (110B).

6. The subscriber line circuit as claimed in one of the claims 1 to 5, characterized by means for terminating modem connections.

7. The subscriber line circuit as claimed in one of the claims 1 to 6, characterized in that
the subscriber-side communication means have means for A-law or μ-law voice coding and/or transmitting means for tones and/or announcements and/or receiving means for tones.

8. The subscriber line circuit as claimed in one of the claims 1 to 7, characterized in that
the means for connecting to the packet-based network (108, 202) of the network-side communication means (118) have at least one Ethernet interface.

9. A communication system (100, 200) having a plurality of different network elements (112A-E, 114, 116) for making services and service features available for subscriber terminals (110A-B) and having at least one subscriber line circuit (102) for coupling said subscriber terminals (110A-B) to the communication system (100, 200),
characterized by

XXXV. a packet-based network (108, 202) for connecting the subscriber line circuit (102) to the network elements,

XXXVI. protocol means (122), assigned to the subscriber line circuit (102), for communicating with the network

elements of the communication system (100, 200), and

XXXVII. means (124), assigned to the subscriber line circuit (102), for bi-directionally converting the information transmitted by subscriber-side communication means (120) to and from the subscriber terminals (110A-B) into the information transmitted by network-side communication means (118) to and from the communication system (100, 200).

10. The communication system as claimed in claim 9, characterized in that at least one of the network elements has means for coupling the packet-based network (108, 202) to switching centers of the conventional circuit-switched telephone network (104).

11. The communication system as claimed in one of the claims 9 or 10, characterized by the following network elements for making services and service features available: gatekeeper (112C) and/or proxy server (112B) for Voice-over-Internet Protocol services and/or elements (112A) for controlling access and/or for user authentication and/or routers (112E) for directly accessing packet-based communication networks (106A-B).

12. The communication system as claimed in one of the claims 9 to 11, characterized in that the packet-based network is an access network (108).

13. The communication system as claimed in one of the claims 9 to 11, characterized in that the packet-based network is the internet (202).